

# Washington State Patrol Media Release

**Chief Lowell M. Porter**

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Captain Fred Fakkema  
Government and Media Relations  
(360) 753-5299 – office  
(360) 753-5469 – fax  
<http://www.wsp.wa.gov>

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Contact: Ms. Christine Fox  
(360) 753-3697 or [equipment@wsp.wa.gov](mailto:equipment@wsp.wa.gov)

## Washington State Patrol Equipment and Standards Section, Bi-Weekly Law Review

### “Motorcycle Helmet”

Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 46.37.530 was amended by the 2003 Legislative session to include, “(3) For purposes of this section, ‘motorcycle helmet’ means a protective covering for the head consisting of a hard outer shell, padding adjacent to and inside the outer shell, and a neck or chin strap type retention system, with a sticker indicating that the motorcycle helmet meets standards established by the United States Department of Transportation.” This amendment was effective as of July 27, 2003.

Wearing a helmet meeting standards set by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) when operating or riding on a motorcycle is still required.

Standards set by the USDOT for motorcycle helmets are outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 49 Section 571.218. This standard establishes the minimum performance requirements for helmets designed for use by motorcyclists and other motor vehicle users. A link to this standard may be found by accessing the State Patrol’s Web page at [www.wsp.wa.gov](http://www.wsp.wa.gov); once there, under “Select a Topic,” scroll until you find “motorcycle helmet.” When you are on the page for motorcycle helmets, scroll down until you see the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards 218—this will bring up the USDOT standards for motorcycle helmets.

Unfortunately there are numerous instances when operator and passengers on motorcycles involved in a collision were seriously injured or died as a result of not wearing a helmet meeting the standards set by the USDOT.

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